

## MDT Fights 2011 Floods

Mother Nature put MDT to the test this spring with winter run-off and heavy rains that led to flooding conditions all over the state. For MDT, that meant keeping around-the-clock watch on highways and infrastructure, and responding to rapidly changing conditions. It also meant, in several severe cases, closing the road and mobilizing repair crews to quickly fix damage. Here are just some of the highlights of what MDT faced.

### Greek Creek –South of Bozeman

MDT maintenance crews mobilized the morning of May 21 to remove rock and debris that washed down from Greek Creek, damaging a 40-inch culvert and causing the closure of US-191. Greek Creek crosses US-191 and flows into the Gallatin River about 10 miles north of Big Sky.

Traffic was temporarily rerouted until crews removed enough debris to open one lane to traffic. The smashed culvert was repaired, only to be immediately plugged with debris again. After maintaining traffic control through the night, efforts resumed Sunday morning with the maintenance crew threading a cable through the plugged culvert and dragging various implements through with an excavator and backhoe. Late Sunday afternoon, with about half of the culvert cleared, crews installed a steel grate to prevent further debris from plugging the culvert. The high water flushed the remaining rock from the culvert, and by Sunday evening both lanes were open to traffic.



*Greek Creek—south of Bozeman at flood stage.*

### US-87/MT-200 near Grass Range

Early afternoon on May 26, an MDT maintenance crew discovered a washout on US-87/MT-200 near Grass Range. Several springs from the hillside had saturated the roadway to such an extent that a section, approximately 70-feet long and 15-feet wide, eroded into the creek. Despite efforts to establish one-way traffic, continuing erosion forced the road to be closed.

A general contractor working on another project in the area was sent to the site that evening. By the evening of May 28, just two days after the collapse, emergency repairs were completed and the roadway reopened.



*Erosion caused a road closure on US-87/MT-200.*

### Rock Creek near Joliet

Over the three-day period between May 25 and 27, Rock Creek flooded the town of Joliet threatening bridges and roads. On the heels of this flood, a second storm was forecast that was expected to have the creek crest well above flood stage. Local landowners, county commissioners, contractors, and MDT Maintenance and Engineering staff discussed possible solutions. A private contractor was hired to place rip-rap at the base of the bridge and build an armored stream bank to prevent flood waters from entering the town of Joliet for the second time.

The rip-rap project began on May 28 and was completed on May 30. Shortly after, the creek reached levels even higher than those that flooded the town previously. Thanks to the newly constructed features, the bridges, roads, and town of Joliet survived the year's second flood without damage.



*A newly-constructed stream bank kept Rock Creek's raging waters within its banks, saving Joliet from a second flood disaster.*

MDT is now back to business as usual with summer construction and maintenance work. It won't be long before plows are put back on the trucks in preparation for winter. Montanans can be assured; whatever Mother Nature cooks up this winter, MDT will continue to be on alert and ready for action.

# Federal Transportation Program Still Uncertain

SAFETEA-LU, the long-term federal surface transportation authorization program, expired September 30, 2009. Since then, states have been operating on a number of successive short-term program extensions, ranging from weeks to months. The latest program extension expires September 30, 2011.

These extensions, though difficult to use as a basis for long-term program planning, have provided states a level of funding comparable to SAFETEA-LU levels, which is minimally adequate to preserve the nation's highway infrastructure.

Since then, both the House and Senate committees that handle transportation issues have released outlines of programs they intend to pursue. The House proposal calls for a six-year authorization that includes program consolidation, streamlining program delivery, increased public/private partnering and innovative financing for project funding, implementing national performance measures, and cutting program funding to live within the current highway trust fund balance estimates, which works out to about a 35 percent reduction in funding. Under this program, FHWA estimates that approximately 630,000 jobs would be lost nationally, 5,000 of which would be lost in Montana.

The Senate proposal recommends a two-year bill at SAFETEA-LU funding levels that includes core program revisions that consolidate programs while adding emphasis on freight movements, pursuing innovative financing mechanisms, requiring state-defined performance measures, accelerated project delivery, and more comprehensive planning processes. However, to sustain SAFETEA-LU funding levels for two years, bill sponsors will need to find an additional \$6 billion per year (\$12 billion for the two years).

Aside from the considerable differences between these proposals, the state of transportation revenue generation remains uncertain.

The national deficit, and need to increase the debt limit or face federal government shutdown, was addressed for the short-term, with a general hold placed on discretionary funding and a joint committee charged with identifying \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction by January 2012 to stave off more aggressive budget cuts. These discussions will weigh large on all federal program funding levels, and it's unlikely that transportation will come through unscathed.

Of equal concern, though less discussed, is the fuel tax termination date. Per IRS code, the 18.3-cents per gallon federal fuel tax collected and deposited in the Highway Trust Fund will end on September 30, 2011. The termination reduces federal fuel taxes collected to 4.3-cents per gallon, and deposits those collections to the general fund. With so many unresolved issues as we move toward the program extension expiration and fuel tax termination date, it's most likely that the federal transportation program will continue to operate under short term program extensions for the foreseeable future. Whether these extensions will be at current or reduced funding levels is unclear.

As we move into developing the program for the next construction season, MDT is planning for current-year funding levels, with contingency plans for funding reductions. As reauthorization discussions move forward, MDT will continue to work with our Congressional Delegation, other states, and state associations to promote and protect rural state needs for program funding.

Aviation is also operating on continuing resolutions; and MDT Aeronautics continues to protect state aviation needs for funding.

# Tim Reardon Named MDT Director



*Tim Reardon, MDT Director*

Governor Brian Schweitzer appointed Tim Reardon MDT director after Jim Lynch resigned on August 11. Tim has served as the Transportation Department's chief legal counsel since June 1994.

He stated that he is "humbled and honored to have accepted Governor Brian Schweitzer's appointment," and looks forward to working in his new role.

He previously served as the state workers' compensation judge for more than a decade.

# Saved by Their Seatbelts



Tuesday, July 12, MDT employees Tom Benedik and Tina Shepard reported to their construction office near Victor, where they were surveying and inspecting several area construction projects. As they traveled between projects, their pickup truck was broadsided, causing their vehicle to rollover into the ditch.

The impact was so severe that most of the loose items in the truck cab ejected through the windows. However, Tom and Tina were securely buckled and survived unscathed.

They both buckled up before they got on the road, and are convinced they would not have survived or would have been severely injured had they not fastened their seatbelts. This is a good lesson and reminder to buckle up every trip, every time, no matter how far you travel.



*The cab was crushed during the rollover, but both occupants were safely and securely buckled in their seatbelts and escaped unharmed.*



## MDT Wins National Awards

MDT's achievements were recognized recently with two national awards - America's Transportation Award from the American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials and the Exemplary Ecosystem Initiative Award from the Federal Highway Administration.

### Shiloh Road in Billings

MDT received national recognition for the Shiloh Road reconstruction project. It received America's Transportation Award for the Western Region and is now being considered for the national award. This award recognizes MDT for demonstrating specific measurement, process management, and quality assurance methods to deliver a quality product while demonstrating effective schedule managing from project conception to completion. This award recognizes MDT's involvement and interaction with the Billings community and the degree that traffic movement improved.

The Shiloh Road project involved the reconstruction of approximately 4.5 miles. The four-lane divided facility features:

- An unprecedented number (eight in total) of multilane roundabouts in series
- Continuous bicycle and pedestrian facilities including a 10-foot multiuse path
- Large pedestrian underpass
- Extensive landscaping
- The first noise barrier wall in Montana
- Access control for safety

Traffic now flows safely and smoothly, and travel time, congestion, and delays are all significantly reduced.

### FHWA Award for Ecosystem Approach

MDT received the 2011 Exemplary Ecosystem Initiative Award from the Federal Highway Administration for its work on the ITEEM project - Integrated Transportation and Ecological Enhancements for Montana. The national award honors exemplary ecosystem and habitat projects unique or highly unusual in the following ways:

- Geographic scope
- Use of cutting-edge science or technology
- High level of environmental standards
- High-quality results achieved
- Recognition by environmental interests as being particularly valuable or noteworthy

Developed in 2007, the ITEEM process encourages agencies to plan infrastructure projects and related restoration/mitigation opportunities and achieve large-scale, ecosystem-based conservation while opening the lines of communication between agencies. MDT and FHWA initiated the ITEEM Process Pilot Study on Highway 83 in the Seeley-Swan region in 2008 as a test site. The study confirmed that the ITEEM process enhanced coordination among agencies and streamlined the environmental review and interagency considerations during the transportation scoping and planning processes. It improved predictability of project permitting and improved communication and trust between agencies allowing for long-term commitments to be made early in the planning and development.

More information on the ITEEM process and pilot study can be found at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/iteem/hwy83.shtml>, or contact Deb Wambach at [dwambach@mt.gov](mailto:dwambach@mt.gov) or by phone at 444-0461.

## Vote for Shiloh Road as "People's Choice"

The Shiloh Road project is now among ten transportation projects from around the country competing for America's Transportation Awards' People's Choice Award. The award will be decided by popular vote of the general public. For the Shiloh Road project to win, it must receive the most online votes at [www.AmericasTransportationAward.org](http://www.AmericasTransportationAward.org). Voting will be open through October 7, 2011.

## Call for Abstracts— Submittal Deadline is October 1, 2011

### *National Conference on Transportation Planning for Small and Medium-sized Communities*



TRB Committee ADA30 - Transportation Planning for Small and Medium-sized Communities 'Tools of the Trade' conference will to be held in Big Sky, Montana (near Yellowstone National Park), September 12-14, 2012.

The committee has issued a Call for Abstracts for papers and presentations for the conference. The deadline to submit an abstract is October 1, 2011.

Complete details are available at <http://www.trbtoolsofthetrade.org/default.htm>.

For more information contact Lynn Zanto at 444-3445 or by e-mail at [lzan-to@mt.gov](mailto:lzan-to@mt.gov).

## Montana Transportation Commission Changes

Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer recently announced the appointment of a new commissioner to the Montana Transportation Commission. Carol Lambert of Broadus replaces Nancy Espy as the District 4 commissioner. Additionally, District 1 Commissioner Kevin Howlett has been reappointed to the commission. Howlett was also named commission chairman, the position held by outgoing Commissioner Espy.

On behalf of the Montana Department of Transportation, many thanks go to Commissioner Espy for her 12 years of dedicated service to the commission and transportation issues in Montana.

# 2011 Tribal Transportation Safety Summit

The 2011 Montana Tribal Safety Summit was held June 7 in Helena. This was the first time all tribal governments and state and federal partners were invited to meet on the subject of tribal transportation safety since the 2005 Tribal Safety Conscious Planning Forum. The purpose was to discuss transportation safety issues affecting Montana tribal communities. Participants included tribal leaders, law enforcement, injury prevention officials, and planners.



2011 Montana Tribal Transportation Safety Summit

State and federal agencies represented include MDT's Planning, Traffic Safety Engineering, and Traffic Safety Office, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Montana Highway Patrol, Department of Health and Human Services, FHWA, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Matt See Walker of the Northern Plains Tribal Technical Assistance Program delivered the invocation. Opening remarks were provided by MDT, Montana FHWA Administrator Kevin McLaury, Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council Chair Jay St. Goddard, and tribal leaders were all invited to speak on behalf of their tribes.

Tribal members shared information on their safety programs, discussed data collection strategies, and developed recommendations for reducing Native American traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

Participants expressed that the leading transportation safety problems facing Native Americans in Montana are impaired driving, poor quality tribal roads, and lack of seatbelt and child passenger safety seat use. Other safety problems include open-range cattle and distracted driving.

Technical assistance and continued coordination and collaboration was deemed helpful in keeping tribal safety efforts moving forward. An annual Tribal Transportation Safety Summit will help accomplish this. Anyone interested in working with a team to reduce Native American crash fatalities and incapacitating injuries can contact Pam Langve-Davis at [plangvedavis@mt.gov](mailto:plangvedavis@mt.gov) or 444-7646.

## 2011 Annual Transportation Safety Meeting

The 2011 Annual Transportation Safety Meeting held June 8-9 in Helena was a great success with more than 100 participants. This is the fifth annual safety meeting held since the Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) began in 2006.

The meeting provides an opportunity for safety partners such

*Continued on page 6*

## Research Corner Research Projects: Idea to Implementation

In support of MDT's mission to serve the public by providing a safe and cost-effective transportation system, the department sponsors a variety of research efforts. The goals of these efforts are to evaluate and advance new technologies, materials, and methods; develop design and analysis techniques; and study current transportation challenges.

During this year's annual research solicitation process, initiated by the MDT Research Section, four of the nine research ideas submitted were moved forward to technical panels. No funding was committed to these projects at this time; rather, the ideas will be further developed into scopes of work and proposals, which will be presented to the Research Review Committee (RRC) for funding approval at a later date. Listed below are the titles and a brief description of the 2011 research ideas:

**Montana Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) Strategy** - The purpose of this proposed project is to determine how to make best use of the extensive data collected from existing WIM sites and where to place additional sites.

**Making Best Use of Federal Programs to Reduce Transportation-Related Traffic Congestion and Improve Air Quality in Montana** - The primary purpose of this proposed project is to reassess the Montana Air and Congestion Initiative program to identify the most cost effective projects with the biggest air quality benefit.

**Evaluating Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions and Wildlife Connectivity in the Madison Valley and Hebgen Lake Areas** - The purpose of this proposed study is to collect animal movements and to determine mitigation options for future road improvements in the vicinity of the highway corridor on US 287.

**A Peer-to-Peer Traffic Safety Campaign Program** - The purpose of this proposed project is to create a peer-to-peer driver's safety program designed for high school students between the ages of 15 to 18.

Technical panels are formed to investigate the problem from inception through implementation; determine if a research need truly exists; develop a scope of work; evaluate proposals; and, if the research is funded, make sure the research stays on track and the results are implemented as appropriate.

The proposal for the Determination of Material Properties and Deflection Behaviors for Contemporary Prestressed Beam Design project was also recently approved by the RRC. This project will investigate the specific properties of the concrete used for the construction of prestressed concrete girder bridges and prediction of their deflection behaviors. This information will be used to move forward with new and more cost-effective prestress concrete bridge designs in the future.

For information on past and current research projects, go to [http://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/sub\\_listing.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/sub_listing.shtml).

MDT research programs serve to discover, develop, and extend knowledge needed to operate, maintain, and improve the statewide multimodal transportation system.

## Transit Tales

### Helena's New Transit Facility Now in Full Swing

The Helena Area Transit System (HATS) held the grand opening for its new transit facility on May 25, with Mayor Jim Smith acknowledging all those involved in its construction, including MDT.

The facility is located on Montana Avenue across from Mergenthaler's Transfer and Storage. It consists of a 20,000 square foot building for maintenance and storage. This is connected to a building with offices, lobby, and restrooms by a porte-cochere—a passageway designed to allow vehicles to enter an interior courtyard from the street (see photo below). An auxiliary building for cold storage is located on the same lot.

The maintenance building includes a heavy-duty lift for inspecting and maintaining vehicles and an automatic bus wash. The office area also houses the ticket window for Rimrock Trailways and has incorporated architectural features from the nearby Union Pacific train depot.

The project's inception came in the late 1990s as the former facility began to show substantial issues and couldn't keep up with increasing ridership, which grew from 35,000 in 1995 to 60,000 in 2005 to 120,000 in 2010. Passengers of HATS and Rimrock were often left standing outside and staff was working in tight quarters in the former facility—a renovated gas station.

The new facility's spacious lobby has seating and other amenities to enhance the experience for passengers as well as offices, a break room, and conference room for the staff. The maintenance facility has state-of-the-art heating and ventilating and the concrete parking pad beneath the porte-cochere is heated to provide safe footing in winter conditions.

Planning funds from MDT were used to locate a site and determine the scope of the facility. In 2004, funding became available to design the facility. In 2009, construction funds from the American

Recovery and Reinvestment Act allowed the project to be completed.



*At left is the front face of the new Helena Transit Facility.*



*Shown above is the porte-cochere. The concrete parking pad beneath is heated to provide safe footing by preventing icy conditions.*

### Safe Routes to School and Journeys from Home—Dillon, Montana



As Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs continue to spread across Montana, Dillon's SRTS effort is a great example of a successful program

designed to change students' behavior when walking and biking to and from school. Starting in 2009, Dillon was awarded funding to develop a SRTS behavioral program for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. After a successful year of SRTS projects that educated and motivated students' safe travels, Dillon continued in 2010 with behavioral projects and a new construction project that improved safety around the school.

Much of Dillon's SRTS program success can be attributed to broad community support and involvement. Dillon's community is supportive of programs that improve the overall health and safety of children. They also take a comprehensive approach to SRTS with construction projects targeted at areas that enhance ongoing education and encouragement programs.

Dillon began their SRTS program with lots of energy and received community support through initial outreach at the county fair where they distributed 140 bike helmets, hoping that every child would have and use a helmet. Another 230 helmets were distributed later. Also, donated bicycles are refurbished and made available to students. So far, 60 bicycles have found new homes. The refurbished bicycles will be used as Dillon implements the Journeys from Home Elementary Traffic Education program.

Another example of community support comes from an energetic and dedicated group of Campus Corps volunteers from the University of Montana Western who started a walking school bus on October 6, 2010, with 23 children. A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school or home with one or more adults. The walking school bus is available every school day to and from school. In the spring of 2011, under the leadership of the Campus Corps, they expanded to two walking school bus routes. The new construction project for the upcoming year will improve sidewalks and accessibility along the walking school bus route established by the Campus Corp.

It is hoped that Dillon's energy and enthusiasm are an inspiration to others and that projects like the Walking School Bus program will be replicated in other communities.

For more information on Journeys from Home contact [www.journeysfromhomeMontana.com](http://www.journeysfromhomeMontana.com). For more information on SRTS or bicycle and pedestrian issues contact Mark Keeffe at 444-9273 or by e-mail at [mkeeffe@mt.gov](mailto:mkeeffe@mt.gov).



# New MDT Administrators



Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator

e-mail at [smintz@mt.gov](mailto:smintz@mt.gov).

Shane Mintz was recently named the Glendive District Administrator for the Montana Department of Transportation. He replaces Ray Mengel who retired June 30, 2011.

Shane graduated from MSU Northern in 1992. He was the manager of MDT's Real Estate Services and brings with him more than 14 years of transportation experience.

Contact Shane at 345-8212 or by



Duane Williams, Motor Carrier Services Administrator

Duane Williams is the new Motor Carrier Services Administrator for MDT, replacing Dennis Sheehy who retired in February 2010.

Duane graduated from Montana State University and brings 12 years of management experience to his new position. Most recently, he served as the Traffic and Safety Engineer. He can be reached at [duwilliams@mt.gov](mailto:duwilliams@mt.gov), or by phone at 444-7312.

## Safety meetings . . . continued from page 4

as local, state, federal, and tribal agencies, along with individuals and organizations to gather and discuss ways to improve highway safety.

Reducing injuries and saving lives on Montana's roadways is the goal, and by working together progress is being made. Vehicle miles of travel have increased over the years, yet there were fewer than 200 highway fatalities in 2010—the lowest number since 1997. This group is on track to reach the goal of reducing fatalities and incapacitating injuries by half, by the year 2030.

The 2011 Annual Safety meeting summary, presentations, and data can be found at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/safety/plans-programs/chsp.shtml> or contact Pam Langve-Davis at [plangvedavis@mt.gov](mailto:plangvedavis@mt.gov), or by phone at 444-7646.



2011 Annual Transportation Safety Meeting

## CTEP Spotlight

CTEP is the Community Transportation Enhancement Program. For more information, contact Mike Wherley at 444-4221 or [mwherley@mt.gov](mailto:mwherley@mt.gov).

## A Fresh New Look for Downtown Polson

A five-block section of Main Street in downtown Polson has a new look, thanks to a major reconstruction project undertaken by the city of Polson. Trees, landscaping, new street lighting, traffic calming "bulb-outs" with new sidewalks, and Americans with Disabilities features are all a part of the transformation. In addition to these enhancements, the overall project included new underground utilities, drainage improvements, street paving, signing, and striping. The entire project cost exceeded \$1 million with nearly \$400,000 in CTEP funds and local matching funds provided by the City of Polson and Lake County. This project demonstrates how local communities, city and county in this case, can combine CTEP funds with other funding sources to complete larger projects that address a multitude of needed

improvements. The CTEP funding serves to provide the infrastructure improvement projects, resulting not only in newly paved streets and sidewalks, but a streetscape that is pleasing and inviting to motorists and pedestrians alike.

Work began the summer of 2010 and wrapped up in the spring of 2011, resulting in a fresh look that will only get better as trees mature and landscape plantings take root.

The Kalispell office of Thomas, Dean & Hoskins, Inc. provided consulting engineering design and construction services for the project. Shari Johnson & Associates Engineering also assisted the city in project management. The project construction was completed by LHC, Inc. Construction Company of Kalispell.



A portion of Polson Main Street before major reconstruction.



A portion of Polson Main Street after major reconstruction.

# Doc Siegfriedt and the Black and White Trail by MDT Historian Jon Axline

In the early years of the twentieth century, new roads were sometimes as much a product of local promoters as they were of engineers. By World War I, Montana was crisscrossed by nearly 68,000 miles of county roads, some of which also bore the designation of State Highway. Yet, as automobile technology improved and roads were reconstructed to better accommodate them, some Montanans began to look for ways to draw visitors to the Treasure State to enhance local economies. Community boosters were important to the process and much of Montana's early tourism industry was dependent on them. Of those, one man really stood out: John Charles Friedrich "Doc" Siegfriedt.

Born in Iowa in 1879, Doc Siegfriedt graduated from the College of Physicians and Surgeons at the University of Illinois in 1902. After working as a doctor in Wibaux, Montana, he moved to Bearcreek in Carbon County in 1906, and tended to the coal miners and their families. During his 24-year tenure there, Siegfriedt served five terms as the city's mayor and became a tireless advocate of the county. A man of many interests (all of which involved the economic development of Carbon County), he was a recognized amateur paleontologist and geologist. An inveterate "joiner," he belonged to every civic and fraternal organization that would have him in Bearcreek and nearby Red Lodge. To paraphrase Alice Roosevelt's comment about her father Teddy, (which applied to Siegfriedt as well), at weddings Siegfriedt wanted to be the bride and at funerals the corpse.

In 1915, Siegfriedt formed the Black and White Trail Association to build a road across the Beartooth Mountains from Bearcreek to Cooke City. The proposed scenic road had a dual purpose: to provide access to Cooke City and Yellowstone National Park and to attract tourists and outdoorsmen to the area's recreational opportunities. By 1919, Doc was able to raise enough money by public subscription to build nearly two miles of the road from near Bearcreek to the base of nearby Mount Maurice. Siegfriedt's and Carbon County's determination to build the road compelled the Montana State Highway Commission to fund a project to build an additional 2.7 miles of the Black and White Trail later that year. The highway commission had just begun funding road projects with the state's share of the million dollars allotted to it by the 1916 Federal Aid Road Act. In the case of the Black and White Trail,

Carbon County was responsible for providing the state's match for the federal money. The highway commission designed the road, surveyed the route, and provided a project manager on-site when construction was underway.

Photographs of the survey crew taken in 1919 indicate that fishing the Beartooth's many trout-rich streams was a favorite off-hour activity for the men.

In May 1919, the highway commission and Carbon County awarded a contract to Albert Carlson of Columbus to construct 2.7 miles of Black and White Trail for \$31,699. Work on the project began that month and the road was nearly finished within two months. The *Picket-Journal* reported that by early July the work crews had built 13 switchbacks up the side of Mount Maurice. The switchbacks climbed 800 feet on a two-to-ten percent grade through a narrow canyon. The Federal Bureau of Public Roads and Highway Commissioner Dan Curran were impressed by the work and pronounced the road feasible for automobile traffic.

Doc Siegfriedt hoped the completion of nearly five miles of road would enable him to raise more money to complete the Black and White Trail over the Beartooths to Cooke City. By 1920, he had raised enough money to survey the route from Mount Maurice over the Line Creek Plateau to Cooke City. Unfortunately, his funds

ran out before completing the survey. In 1921, the future of the Black and White Trail dimmed with the passage of a new Federal Aid Road Act. The legislation encouraged the development of inter- and intrastate highways that connected major population centers. The Black and White Trail was, essentially, a road to nowhere. Consequently, the highway commission dropped it from the state highway system and, by 1924, Siegfriedt abandoned the Black and White Trail, instead throwing his support behind a new plan to build a trans-Beartooth Plateau to Cooke City from Red Lodge. That highway would be built and become one of the most scenic routes in the United States.

Although abandoned by 1924, the Black and White Trail long appeared on Forest Service maps and in promotional brochures for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. The Black and White Trail can still be hiked even though large trees have grown up in the middle of it. Although the Black and White Trail survived its creator, who died in 1940, it became a largely forgotten predecessor of its more famous successor, the Beartooth Highway.



*Doc Siegfriedt formed the Black and White Trail Assn. to build roads across the Beartooth Mountains.*



*Fishing the Beartooth's many trout-rich streams was a favorite off-hour activity for the men.*



*The 13 Black and White Trail switchbacks climbed 800 feet on a two-to-ten percent grade through a narrow canyon. It can still be hiked today.*



*Newsline is a quarterly publication of the Rail, Transit and Planning Division, Montana Department of Transportation.*

MDT's mission is to serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.

**Rail, Transit & Planning Division  
Montana Department of Transportation**

2701 Prospect Avenue  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, Montana 59620-1001  
800-714-7296

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***MDT Wants Your Comments***

To receive a list of highway projects MDT plans to present to the Transportation Commission, visit [http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/docs/trans\\_comm/proposed\\_proj.pdf](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/docs/trans_comm/proposed_proj.pdf), or give us a call at 1-800-714-7296. You can mail your comments on proposed projects to MDT at the following address or e-mail them to [mdtnewprojects@mt.gov](mailto:mdtnewprojects@mt.gov).

MDT Project Analysis Manager  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001

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***Contact Information***

Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call 800-714-7296 (in Montana only) or 406-444-3423. The TTY number is 406-444-7696 or 800-335-7592.

Administrator (Lynn Zanto) .....	444-3445
..... <a href="mailto:lzanto@mt.gov">lzanto@mt.gov</a>	
Bicyclist/Pedestrian (Mark Keefe) .....	444-9273
..... <a href="mailto:mkeefe@mt.gov">mkeefe@mt.gov</a>	
Environmental (Tom Martin) .....	444-0879
..... <a href="mailto:tomartin@mt.gov">tomartin@mt.gov</a>	
Highway Traffic Safety (Priscilla Sinclair).....	444-7417
..... <a href="mailto:psinclair@mt.gov">psinclair@mt.gov</a>	
Map Orders.....	444-6119
..... <a href="http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/maps">http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/maps</a>	
Multimodal Programs (Doug McBroom) .....	444-7289
..... <a href="mailto:dmcmbroom@mt.gov">dmcmbroom@mt.gov</a>	
Projects (Paul Johnson).....	444-7259
..... <a href="mailto:paujohnson@mt.gov">paujohnson@mt.gov</a>	
Secondary Roads (Wayne Noem) .....	444-6109
..... <a href="mailto:wnoem@mt.gov">wnoem@mt.gov</a>	
Road Data & Mapping (Ed Ereth) .....	444-6111
..... <a href="mailto:eereth@mt.gov">eereth@mt.gov</a>	
Traffic Data (Becky Duke) .....	444-6122
..... <a href="mailto:bduke@mt.gov">bduke@mt.gov</a>	
Transit (Audrey Allums) .....	444-4210
..... <a href="mailto:aallums@mt.gov">aallums@mt.gov</a>	
Statewide & Urban Planning (Zia Kazimi).....	444-7252
..... <a href="mailto:zkazimi@mt.gov">zkazimi@mt.gov</a>	
Newsline Editor (Sandra Waddell).....	444-7614
..... <a href="mailto:swaddell@mt.gov">swaddell@mt.gov</a>	

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